

What is claimed is:

1. A method of operating a solid polymer electrolyte fuel cell comprising:

supplying an oxidant reactant stream to the cathode electrode of said fuel cell;

5 supplying a fuel reactant stream to the anode electrode of said fuel cell;

monitoring a temperature parameter indicative of the operating temperature of said fuel cell; and

10 when said temperature parameter is below a predetermined threshold value, reactant starving at least a portion of one of said electrodes.

2. A solid polymer electrolyte fuel cell apparatus comprising:

an oxidant supply system for directing an oxidant reactant stream to a cathode electrode of said fuel cell;

5 a fuel supply system for directing a fuel reactant stream to an anode electrode of said fuel cell;

10 a temperature sensor for detecting the temperature of said fuel cell; and

a control system for reactant starving at least one of said electrodes responsive to the output from said temperature sensor.

3. The fuel cell apparatus of claim 2
wherein said control system comprises apparatus
for intermittently interrupting the supply of one
of said reactant streams to said fuel cell
5 electrodes.

4. The fuel cell apparatus of claim 2
wherein said control system comprises apparatus
for connecting a transient electrical load to
draw electrical power from said fuel cell.